

**UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
POLLUTION REPORT**

**I. HEADING**

**DATE:** August 7, 1995  
**SUBJECT:** Lewis Terry Residence, Lemont, Cook Co., Illinois  
**FROM:** Fred Bartman, USEPA OSC, Region V, EERB, RS-2  
**TO:** T. Johnson, USEPA, OSWER, Washington, D.C.  
R. Karl, Branch Chief, EERB, Chicago, IL  
B. Messenger, Chief, ESS, EERB, Chicago, IL  
D. Bruce, Chief RS-2, Chicago, IL  
G. Narsete, OPA, Chicago, IL  
T. Krueger, ORC, Chicago, IL  
M. King, HAZMAT coordinator, Lemont Fire District  
D. Alberg/J. Clark, IEPA, Springfield, IL

EPA Region 5 Records Ctr.



247055

**POLREP NO.:** POLREP 1 (Initial)**II. BACKGROUND**

<b>SITE NO.:</b>	059S
<b>DELIVERY ORDER NUMBER:</b>	5001-05-653
<b>RESPONSE AUTHORITY:</b>	CERCLA EMERGENCY RESPONSE (ERB)
<b>CERCLIS ID NO.:</b>	None
<b>NPL STATUS:</b>	Non-NPL
<b>STATE NOTIFICATION:</b>	IEPA
<b>ACTION MEMORANDUM STATUS:</b>	Action Memo is being drafted. A verbal approval for \$50,000 was received on 07-26-95.
<b>START DATE:</b>	July 26, 1995
<b>DEMOBILIZATION DATE:</b>	N/A
<b>COMPLETION DATE:</b>	N/A

**III. SITE INFORMATION****A.) CERCLA Incident Category:** Abandoned Laboratory**B.) Site Description:**

The Lewis Terry Residence (LTR) site is located Lemont, Illinois ( N 41°40'25.8", W 87°59'54.5"). The site is located inside a house owned by Lewis Terry. The site is in a densely populated residential/commercial area. The site has residences adjacent to its north, south, and west sides. Adjacent to the east side of the site is

On July 25, 1995, house inspectors discovered chemicals in the basement of LTR and called the Lemont Fire District HAZMAT team. On July 26, 1995, the USEPA responded to an emergency

response call from the Lemont Fire District. According to Mr. Lewis Terry, he had previously been manufacturing thiophosgene, a poison, in his basement during World War II and up to the 1970s. The thiophosgene was produced by combining perchloromethyl mercaptan and stannous chloride in a hydrochloric acid solution. Stannic chloride was a by-product of the reaction. From the reconnaissance, there was estimated to be approximately 600 containers of chemicals in the basement with the majority being 1-gallon in size. There were several 20-gallon and 5-gallon containers. Several of the bottles labeled as "Hydrochloric Acid" appeared to be filled with a waste material of a reddish brown liquid with whitish colored solid crystals on the bottom. There was also some bottles with unknown contents purchased by Mr. Terry from a lab several years ago. ERCS crew members were mobilized immediately to begin removal activities. All the chemicals reportedly stored at LTR are hazardous to human health through inhalation, ingestion, and skin absorption. Thiophosgene and perchloromethyl mercaptan can produce phosgene gas, a nerve agent used in World War II, in the event of a fire. Stannous chloride and stannic chloride are water reactive. The house violates several building codes and is a fire hazard. Utilities have been shut off.

#### **IV. RESPONSE INFORMATION**

**Current Situation:** The weather has been hot, 80 to 100°F, with high humidity and some rain. Lots of media activity occurred during the first two days of the response/removal. Newspaper reporters stop by the site occasionally. There are concerned citizens in the neighborhood who stop by the site occasionally and receive an update from the OSC on site activities. A press release was issued to the public.

##### **Removal Activities To Date:**

07-27-95: The ERCS crew made initial entry into building and placed a temporary fence with warning signs around property.

07-28-95: The temporary fence was pulled down and a 6' free-standing chain-link fence was installed around the site with warning signs. A 35 KW generator was rented. A work plan and a health and safety plan were written.

07-31-95: A mobile laboratory was mobilized to site and set up in the driveway of the residence. A remote bottle opener was also set up at the rear of the residence. Drums were ordered and the generator was hooked up to the lab trailer.

08-01-95 to 08-06-95: Approximately 75% of the containers in the basement of the residence have been removed, sampled, and staged in poly drums. Compatibility testing was performed on the material in the containers which were removed. The testing has revealed that most of the containers sampled have a hydrochloric acid base. Also found were sulfuric acid, nitric acid, a cyanide containing basic liquid, and containers labeled as diethyl phthalate and phenol. The sulfuric acid and nitric acid are reactive with the stannic chloride and stannous chloride. After compatibility testing is performed, compatible materials are grouped together in poly drums.

**Enforcement:** A Notice of CERCLA Liability was issued to Lewis Terry on 07-27-95. Full access was granted on 07-28-95. Lewis Terry has declined to perform any removal activities until total costs are known. U.S. EPA is evaluation disposal options and costs and will submit results to Mr. Terry. A model Consent Order was given to Mr. Terry and his attorney.

**Planned Removal Activities:** Chemical containers and drums are to be removed from the site to the mobile laboratory trailer. A chemist will complete compatibility testing on the chemicals and identify waste streams. Wastes will then be overpacked and the drums staged for off-site disposal.

**Next Steps:**

- \* Complete container removal, sampling, and staging.
- \* *Complete compatibility testing of all chemicals.*
- \* Composite compatible waste streams into drums.
- \* Stage drums for off-site disposal

**Key Issues:** None at this time.

**IV. COST INFORMATION**

	<u>BUDGETED</u>	<u>COST TO DATE (estimated)</u>
ERCS	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 23,871.14 (as of 08-02-95)
TAT	\$	\$11,657.97 (as of 08-05-95)